

§ 45.1 Purpose.

(a) This document revises 32 CFR part 45.

(b) Prescribes procedures concerning the preparation and distribution of revised DD Form 214 to comport with the requirements of 10 U.S.C. 1168, 972, and 32 CFR part 41 and the control and publication of separation program designators (SPDs).

§ 45.2 Applicability and scope.

(a) The provisions of this part apply to the Office of the Secretary of Defense, the Military Services, the Joint Staff, and the Defense Agencies (hereafter referred to as “DoD Components”). The term “Military Services,” as used here, refers to the Army, Navy, the Air Force, the Marine Corps and, by agreement with the Department of Transportation, to the Coast Guard.

(b) Its provisions include procedures on the preparation and distribution of DD Forms 214, 214WS, 215 (Appendices A, B, and C) which record and report the transfer or separation of military personnel from a period of active duty. (NOTE: Computer-generated formats are acceptable substitutes provided Assistant Secretary of Defense (Force Management and Personnel) approval is obtained.) DD Forms 214 and 215 (or their substitutes) will provide:

(1) *The Military Services* with a source of information relating to military personnel for administrative purposes, and for making determinations of eligibility for enlistment or reenlistment.

(2) *The Service member* with a brief, clear-cut record of the member’s active service with the Armed Forces at the time of transfer, release, or discharge, or when the member changes status or component while on active duty.

(3) *Appropriate governmental agencies* with an authoritative source of information which they require in the administration of Federal and State laws applying to personnel who have been discharged, otherwise released, or transferred to a Reserve component while on active duty.

(c) Its provisions include procedures on the control and distribution of all lists of SPDs.

§ 45.3 Policy and procedures.

(a) Administrative issuance or reissuance of DD Forms 214 and 215.

(1) The DD Form 214 will normally be issued by the command from which the member was separated. In those instances where a DD Form 214 was not issued, the Services concerned may establish procedures for administrative issuance.

(2) The DD Form 214, once issued, will not be reissued except:

(i) When directed by appropriate appellate authority, Executive Order, or by the Secretary concerned.

(ii) When it is determined by the Service concerned that the original DD Form 214 cannot be properly corrected by issuance of a DD Form 215 or if the correction would require issuance of more than two DD Forms 215.

(iii) When two DD Forms 215 have been issued and an additional correction is required.

(3) Whenever a DD Form 214 is administratively issued or reissued, an appropriate entry stating that fact and the date of such action will be made in Block 18, Remarks, of the DD Form 214 unless the appellate authority, Executive Order, or Secretarial directive specifies otherwise.

(b) The Military Services will ensure that every member (except as limited in paragraph (b)(2) of this section and excluding those listed in paragraph (c) of this section being separated from the Military Services is given a completed DD Form 214 describing relevant data regarding the member’s service, and the circumstances of termination. DD Form 214 may also be issued under other circumstances prescribed by the Military Service concerned. A continuation sheet, if required, will be bond paper, and will reference: The DD Form 214 being continued; information from blocks 1 through 4; the appropriate block(s) being continued; the member’s signature, date; and the authorizing official’s signature. DD Forms 214 are not intended to have any legal effect on termination of the member’s service.

(1) *Release or discharge from active service.* (i) The original of DD Form 214 showing separation from a period of active service with a Military Service, including release from a status that is legally determined to be void, will be

physically delivered to the separate prior to departure from the separation activity on the effective date of separation; or on the date authorized travel time commences.

(A) Copy No. 4, containing the statutory or regulatory authority, reentry code, SPD code, and narrative reason for separation also will be physically delivered to the separatee prior to departure, if he/she so requested by initiating Block 30, Member Requests Copy 4.

(B) Remaining copies of DD Form 214 will be distributed on the day following the effective date of separation.

(ii) When separation is effected under emergency conditions which preclude physical delivery, or when the recipient departs in advance of normal departure time (e.g., on leave in conjunction with retirement; or at home awaiting separation for disability), the original DD Form 214 will be mailed to the recipient on the effective date of separation.

(iii) If the separation activity is unable to complete all items on the DD Form 214, the form will be prepared as completely as possible and delivered to the separatee. The separatee will be advised that a DD Form 215 will be issued by the Military Service concerned when the missing information becomes available; and that it will not be necessary for the separatee to request a DD Form 215 for such information.

(iv) If an optical character recognition format is utilized by a Military Service, the first carbon copy of the document will be physically delivered or mailed to the separatee as prescribed in paragraphs (b) (i) through (iii) of this section.

(2) *Release from active duty for training, full-time training duty, or active duty for special work.* Personnel being separated from a period of active duty for training, full-time training duty, or active duty for special work will be furnished a DD Form 214 when they have served 90 days or more, or when required by the Secretary concerned for shorter periods. Personnel shall be furnished a DD Form 214 upon separation for cause or for physical disability regardless of the length of time served on active duty.

(3) *Continuing on active duty.* Members who change their status or component, as outlined below, while they are serving on active duty will be provided a completed DD form 214 upon:

(i) Discharge for immediate enlistment or reenlistment (optional—at the discretion of the Military Services). However, Military Services not providing the DD Form 214 will furnish the member a DD Form 256, "Honorable Discharge Certificate," and will issue instructions requiring those military offices which maintain a member's records to provide necessary Service data to the member for application to appropriate civilian individuals, groups, and governmental agencies. Such data will include Service component, entry data and grades.

(ii) Termination of enlisted status to accept an appointment to warrant or commissioned officer grade.

(iii) Termination of a temporary appointment to accept a permanent warrant or commission in the Regular or Reserve components of the Armed Forces.

(iv) Termination of an officer appointment in one of the Military Services to accept appointment in another Service.

(c) *DD Form 214 need not be prepared for:* (1) Personnel found disqualified upon reporting for active duty and who do not enter actively upon duties in accordance with orders.

(2) Personnel whose active duty, active duty for training, full-time training duty or active duty for special work is terminated by death.

(3) Personnel being removed from the Temporary Disability Retired List.

(4) Enlisted personnel receiving temporary appointments to warrant or commissioned officer grades.

(5) Personnel whose temporary warrant or commissioned officer status is terminated and who remain on active duty to complete an enlistment.

(6) Personnel who terminate their Reserve component status to integrate into a Regular component.

(7) Personnel separated or discharged who have been furnished a prior edition of this form, unless that form is in need of reissuance for some other reason.

(d) *Preparation.* The Military Departments will issue instructions governing the preparation of DD Form 214, consistent with the following:

(1) DD Form 214 is an important record of service which must be prepared accurately and completely. Any unavoidable corrections and changes made in the unshaded areas of the form during preparation shall be neat, legible and initialed on all copies by the authenticating official. The recipient will be informed that making any unauthorized change or alteration of the form will render it void.

(2) Since DD Form 214 is often used by civilian personnel, abbreviations should be avoided.

(3) Copies of DD Form 214 transmitted to various governmental agencies shall be legible, especially those provided to the Veterans Administration (Department of Veterans Affairs, effective March 15, 1989, in accordance with section 18(a), Public Law 100-527 and the Department of Labor).

(4) The authority for a member's transfer or discharge will be cited by reference to the appropriate Military Service regulation, instruction, or manual, followed by the appropriate separation program designator on copies 2, 4, 7, and 8 only. A narrative description to identify the reason for transfer or separation will not be used on copy 1.

(5) To assist the former Service member in employment placement and job counseling, formal inservice training courses successfully completed during the period covered by the form will be listed in Block 14, Military Education; e.g., medical, dental, electronics, supply, administration, personnel or heavy equipment operations. Training courses for combat skills will not be listed. See 1978 Guide to the Evaluation of Educational Experiences in the Armed Services for commonly accepted course titles and abbreviations.

(6) For the purpose of reemployment rights (DoD Directive 1205.12)¹ all extensions of service, except those under 10 U.S.C. 972, are considered to be at

the request and for the convenience of the Government. In these cases, Block 18 of DD Form 214 will be annotated to indicate "Extension of service was at the request and for the convenience of the Government."

(7) When one or more of the data items on the DD Form 214 are not available and the document is issued to the separatee, the applicable block(s) will be annotated "See Remarks." In such cases, Block 18 will contain the entry "DD Form 215 will be issued to provide missing information." When appropriate, Block 18 will also reflect the amount of disability pay, and the inclusive dates of any nonpay/excess leave days.

(8) The authorizing official (E-7, GS-7 or above) will sign the original in ink ensuring that the signature is legible on all carbon copies. If not, a second signature may be necessary on a subsequent carbon copy. The authorized official shall be an E-7, GS-7, or higher grade, except that the Service concerned may authorize chiefs of installation separation activities (E-5, GS-5, or above) to serve in this capacity if designated in writing by the responsible commander and/or director (O-4, or above).

(9) The following are the only authorized entries in Block 24, Character of Service, as appropriate: "Honorable," "Under Honorable Conditions (General)," "Under Other Than Honorable Conditions," "Bad Conduct," "Dishonorable," or "Uncharacterized." When a discharge has been upgraded, the DD Form 214 will be annotated on copies 2 through 8 in Block 18 to indicate the character of service has been upgraded; the date the application for upgrade was made; and the effective date of the corrective action.

(10) The date entered in Block 12.a. shall be the date of enlistment for the earliest period of continuous active service for which a DD Form 214 was not previously issued. For members who have previously reenlisted without being issued a DD Form 214, and who are being separated with any discharge characterization except "Honorable," the following statement shall appear as the first entry in Block 18., "Remarks," on the DD Form 214: "CONTINUOUS HONORABLE ACTIVE

¹Copies may be obtained if needed, from the U.S. Naval Publications and forms Center, Attn: Code 1062, 5801 Tabor Avenue, Philadelphia, PA.

SERVICE FROM (applicable date) UNTIL (applicable date).” The “from” date shall be the date of initial entry into active duty, or the first day of service for which a DD Form 214 was not previously issued, as applicable; the “until” date shall be the date before commencement of the current enlistment.

(11) For Service members retiring from active duty enter in Block 18., “Subject to active duty recall by Service Secretary.”

(12) For Service members being transferred to the Individual Ready Reserve, enter in Block 18., “Subject to active duty recall and/or annual screening.”

(e) *Distribution.* The Military Services will prescribe procedures governing the distribution of copies of the DD Forms 214 and 215, consistent with their internal requirements, and the following:

(1) *DD Form 214—(i) Copy No. 1 (original).* To the member.

(ii) *Copy No. 2.* To be used as the Military Services’ record copy.

(iii) *Copy No. 3.* To the Veterans Administration (Department of Veterans Affairs, effective March 15, 1989, in accordance with section 18(a), Data Processing Center (214), 1614 E. Woodward Street, Austin, Texas 78772. A reproduced copy will also be provided to the hospital with the medical records if the individual is transferred to a VA hospital. If the individual completes VA Form 21-5267, “Veterans Application for Compensation or Pension,” include a copy of the DD Form 214 with medical records forwarded to the VA regional office having jurisdiction over the member’s permanent address. When an individual is in Service and enlisting or reenlisting in an active duty status or otherwise continuing on active duty in another status, copy No. 3 will not be forwarded to the VA.

(iv) *Copy No. 4.* To the member, if the member so requested by having initialed Block 30. If the member does not request this copy, it may be retained in the master military personnel record, to be available in case the member requests a copy later.

(v) *Copy No. 5.* To Louisiana UCX/UCFE, Claims Control Center, Louisiana Department of Labor, P.O. Box

94246, Capitol Station, Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70804-9246.

(vi) *Copy No. 6.* To the appropriate State Director of Veterans Affairs (see enclosure 4), if the member so requested by having checked “Yes” in Block 20, “Member Requests Copy Be Sent to Director of Veterans Affairs.” The member must specify the State. If the member does not request the copy be mailed, it may be utilized as prescribed by the Military Service concerned.

(vii) *Copies No. 7 and 8.* To be distributed in accordance with regulations issued by the Military Service concerned.

(viii) *Additional Copy Requirements.* Discharged Alien Deserters. Provide one reproduced copy of Copy No. 1 to the U.S. Department of State, Visa Office—SCA/VO, State Annex No. 2, Washington, DC 20520, to assist the Visa Office in precluding the unwarranted issuance of visas to discharged and alien deserters in accordance with DoD Directive 1325.2². Place of birth will be entered in Block 18.

(2) *DD Form 214—ws.* Utilized to facilitate the preparation of DD Form 214. The document will be used and disposed of in accordance with regulations issued by the Military Service concerned.

(3) *DD Form 215.* Utilized to correct errors in DD Form 214 discovered after the original has been delivered and/or distribution of copies of the form has been made, and to furnish to separatee information not available when the DD Form 214 was prepared. The distribution of DD Form 215 will be identical to the distribution of DD Form 214.

(4) *Requests for Copies of DD Form 214 Subsequent to Separation.* Agencies maintaining a separatee’s DD Form 214 will provide a copy only upon written request by the member. Agencies will provide the member with 1 copy with the Special Additional Information section, and 1 copy with that information deleted. In the case of DD Form 214 issued prior to July 1, 1979, agencies will provide the member with 1 copy containing all items of information completed, and 1 copy with the following items deleted from the form:

²See footnote 1 to § 545.3(d)(6).

Specific authority and narrative reason for separation, reenlistment eligibility code, and separation program designator/number.

(i) In those cases where the member has supplied an authorization to provide a copy of the DD Form 214 to another individual or group, the copy furnished will not contain the Special Additional Information section or, in the case of DD forms issued prior to July 1, 1979, those items listed in paragraph (e)(4) of this section.

(ii) A copy will be provided to authorized personnel for official purposes only.

(f) *Procurement.* Arrangements for procurement of DD Forms 214, 214-ws, and 215 will be made by the Military Services.

(g) *Modification of Forms.* The modification of the content or format of DD Forms 214, 214-ws, and 215 may not be accomplished without prior authorization of the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Force Management and Personnel) (ASD(FM&P)). Requests to add or delete information will be coordinated with the other Military Services in writing, prior to submission to the ASD(FM&P). If a Military Service uses computer capability to generate forms, the items of information may be arranged, the size of the information blocks may be increased or decreased, and copies 7 and/or 8 may be deleted at the discretion of the Service.

§ 45.4 Responsibilities.

(a) The DD Forms 214 and 215 are a source of significant and authoritative information used by civilian and governmental agencies to validate veteran eligibility for benefits. As such, they are valuable forms and, therefore, vulnerable to fraudulent use. Since they are sensitive, the forms must be safeguarded at all times. They will be transmitted, stored, and destroyed in a manner which will prevent unauthorized use. The Military Services will issue instructions consistent with the following:

(1) All DD Forms 214 will be surprinted with a reproducible screen tint using appropriate security ink on Blocks 1, 3, 4.a, 4.b, 12, and 18 through 30. In addition Blocks 1, 3, 5, and 7 of the DD Form 215 will be similarly

surprinted to make alterations readily discernible. No corrections will be permitted in the screened areas.

(2) All forms will be secured after duty hours.

(3) All obsolete forms will be destroyed.

(4) All forms to be discarded, including those which are blank or partially completed, and reproduced copies of DD Form 214, will be destroyed. No forms will be discarded intact.

(5) Blank forms given to personnel for educational or instructional purposes, and forms maintained for such use, are to be clearly voided in an unalterable manner.

(6) The commander or commanding officer of each unit or activity authorized to issue DD Form 214 will appoint, in writing, a commissioned officer, warrant officer, enlisted member (grade E-7 or above), or DoD civilian (GS-7 or above) who will requisition, control, and issue blank DD Forms 214 and 215. The Service concerned may authorize an E-5 or GS-5 to serve in this capacity.

(7) The Military Services will monitor the use of DD Form 214 and review periodically its issuance to insure compliance with procedures for safeguarding.

(b) The DD Form 214-ws will contain the word "WORKSHEET" on the body of the form (see Appendix B). This DD Form 214-ws will be treated in the same manner as the DD Form 214.

(c) The Military Services will issue appropriate instructions to separation activities stressing the importance of the DD Forms 214 and 215 in obtaining veterans benefits, reemployment rights, and unemployment insurance.

(d) Standard separation program designator (SPD) codes for officer and enlisted personnel developed under the provisions of DoD Instruction 5000.12³ are published in DoD 5000.12-M.

(1) Requests to add, change, or delete an SPD code shall be forwarded by the DoD Component concerned with appropriate justification to the Assigned Responsible Agency accountable for evaluating, recommending approval of, and maintaining such codes: Department of the Navy, Office of The Chief of Naval

³See footnote 1 to § 45.3(d)(6).